Employment Verification Unit
Overview

Purpose: TANF law requires states to meet the Federal Work Participation Rate (WPR). The purpose of the Employment Verification Unit (EVU) is to capture previously unknown participation activity by data-mining the State Directory of New Hire, the National Directory of New Hire, and reports generated by the Employment Administration MIS unit. The creation of the EVU centralized the statewide activity of data-mining client participation.

Background: Created in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003 as a strategy to address the need to increase the Federal Work Participation Rate, the EVU is an integrated unit made up of staff from the Employment Administration (EA) Jobs Program and the Family Assistance Administration (FAA). When clients become employed it affects both their FAA eligibility and their Jobs Program participation. When employment records are found on open TANF cases, the EVU captures the participation for the Jobs Program and works with local FAA staff to close the TANF case.

Objective: The objective of this unit is to verify employment and earned income at the earliest date possible; capture participation for clients who have not reported the employment to DES; and reduce the TANF payment and/or close the TANF case for the first benefit month possible.

As a result of the EVU data-mining activity, DES has consistently met/exceeded the Federal Work Participation Rate.

Procedures: The EA MIS unit creates monthly reports of participants/cases who are not meeting the participation requirement. The EVU targets these cases to find unreported activity.

The open TANF caseload report is run against the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) and the Unemployment Insurance Base Wage Records, which results in a listing of approximately 2000 matches monthly. The file is then converted to a mail merge that produces letters to the reporting employers. This process of letter generation and mailing is completed on a biweekly basis.

In the letter employers are asked to provide details of the employment such as hire and termination dates of employment, hourly wage, rate of pay, number of hours worked weekly, date of first check and reasons for termination.

When the verification is returned, the EVU researches the TANF case to identify the months that TANF payments were received. Every letter verifying an employment placement is entered into the Jobs Program Automated System (JAS). The JAS employment screen is updated with the name, phone number, address of the employer, hourly wage, and number of hours worked per week. The hire and termination dates of employment are entered in the comments area, annotated with EVU as the verification source.

Jobs Program field staff also forward participation information to the EVU on the Participant Record Update Request Form when they become aware of previously unknown participation activity that occurred more than 90 days in the past. The EVU updates JAS with the participation activity information.